



The Bethel Courier.

Volume VI, Number 4

Winter, 1982

Bethel Historical Society



"Snowboat" on Mechanic Street, Bethel, c. 1925.
Photograph, courtesy of Barbara Herrick Brown.

I REMEMBER "THE SNOW BOAT" by Barbara Herrick Brown

The first snow machine in Bethel, called by its builders, a "snowboat" was designed and constructed by Ray Crockett and Arthur Herrick in 1924. The machine was improved, changed and several were custom-built in the following years.

I believe the first one was used as the "stage" to Upton then driven by Moses Davis, the mailman. This was followed by a later model with tractor lags, closed cab, etc. Other owners were Dr. Raymond R. Tibbetts (Tom Brown remembers going with him to a funeral in East Bethel) and Dr. Widd B. Twaddle who would take son John, Bob Littlehale, Kathryn Herrick and myself "ski-going" when he went on house calls out of town to places like Gilead or Albany.

Dr. Sherman S. Greenleaf had one often driven by Hedley Wheeler. He used it in his funeral business and picked up bodies with it. Mailmen Earl Davis, Robert Sanborn and Albert Silver also used them in their work. Clyde Whitman transported students from Grover Hill in one and it was a cold ride!

NEW TRUSTEE

At the annual meeting in September Willard Wight was elected to a three year term on the Society's Board of Trustees. A native of Newry, Mr. Wight was graduated from Gould Academy in 1935. After attendance at the University of Maine at Orono, he served in the United States Army during World War II. Following the war, he worked for the Maine Forest Service for approximately thirty years, retiring to Newry in 1973. He served on the Board of Selectmen of Newry from 1974 to 1982 and is very active in community organizations. In 1943 he married the former Sylvia Barnett and they have three children.

GILEAD CENTENNIAL ADDRESS by Professor A.J. Roberts of Colby College Gilead, Maine July 14, 1904

Editor's Note: The following address was delivered at the Centennial activities in Gilead in 1904. It has been edited to accommodate space considerations and to improve its clarity for modern readers.

In 1772 Oliver Peabody and John Peabody Jr., of Andover, Massachusetts, and John Bodwell and Samuel Bodwell of Methuen petitioned the Legislature of the province of Massachusetts for permission to purchase at a fair price and upon reasonable conditions a tract of land on the Androscoggin River west of Sudbury Canada (Bethel). One of these petitioners Capt. John Peabody fought at Louisbourg and Ticonderoga and the others may have served in the provincial army, but it is evident that in their address to the Legislature they did not refer to any services in the province which would entitle them to special consideration. They wished to buy the land, probably with no intention of settling upon it themselves, but for the satisfaction of the land hunger so common among the early New Englanders.

The following transcript from the court records in the Massachusetts Archives gives an abstract of the petition and the reply of the Legislature:

'June 30, 1772. A petition of Oliver Peabody and John Peabody, Jr., Andover, John Bodwell and Samuel Bodwell of Methuen — setting forth — that there is a tract of Province land on Androscoggin River adjoining the westerly part of a township granted to Captain Fuller and others, of four miles one way and three miles the other which is so situated as that no township can be now had there so as to include it. And praying that the same may be granted to them for such sum of money and upon such conditions as this Court shall order.

In the House of Representatives. Resolved that the prayer of this petition be granted, and that the petitioners have liberty to lay out the land prayed for at the westerly end of a township granted to Josiah Richardson, Esquire and others on both sides of Androscoggin River, as far westerward as the land will admit so as not to interfere with any former grant or with private property, and that they return a plan thereof taken by a Surveyor and Chairman on Oath to this Court within 12 months from the 1st day of July 1772 for confirmation. And that they also give Bond with sufficient sureties to the Province Treasurer or his successor to settle the same with 15 families, each of which within 6 years from the return of the plan to have built a good house of 20 ft. by 18 and 7 ft. stud and have cleared for pastureage of tillage 5 acres each: that they also out of the premises grant 100 acres for the first ordained Protestant Minister, 100 acres for the Ministry and 100 acres for the use of a School, within said Grant; and further that they give Bond with

sufficient sureties to the Treasurer to pay to him or his successor for the use of the Province such a sum of money as the land to plan shall contain shall amount to, at the rate of 300 pounds for a township of the content of 6 miles square within 1 year from the confirmation of the Grant.

In Council, Read and Concurred
Consented to by the Governor'

In accordance with the directions of the Legislature, the petitioners prepared such a plan and the following year presented it for final acceptance and confirmation. The survey showed that the tract contained a little over 6,000 acres, besides about 4,000 acres of river and mountain which the petitioners were not expected to pay for. At the rate fixed by the Legislature, 300 pounds for each six miles square, the purchase price of what came to be called "Peabody's Patent" was little more than 80 pounds or about \$400. The results of the survey, the conditions of the sale and the price to be paid are set forth in the following transcript from the Court Records:

'Saturday June 19, 1773. In the House of Representatives — Resolved that the plan annexed of the contents of 6226 Acres exclusive of the 3956 Acres and 31 pole contained in Mountains and Rivers, laid out pursuant to a grant made to Oliver Peabody and John Peabody, Jr., of Andover, Mass., John and Samuel Bodwell of Methuen, June 27, 1772, lying in the westerly end of a Township granted to Josiah Richardson Esq. and others bounded at the southwesterly corner by a large, high rock—on the eastwardly line a township called Shelburne thence on said line North 8 degrees east by the needle 320 pole to Androscoggin River, then crossing said River and continuing the same course till 872 pole be completed from the aforesaid rock to a spruce tree marked P.B. then east by the needle 1654 pole to a hemlock tree marked P.B. thence south 20 degrees East 370 pole to the northwest corner of a township granted to J. Richardson aforesaid thence on the same course crossing Westerly end of an island in said River 590 pole to a beech tree marked P.B. thence West by the needle over a large mountain 2080 pole to the Rock first mentioned be accepted and hereby is confirmed by the aforesaid Oliver Peabody, John Peabody Jr., John Bodwell and Samuel Bodwell, their heirs and assigns forever, provided they give Bond with sufficient sureties to the Province Treasurer or his successor to settle the same with 15 families, each of which within 6 years from date hereof to — Repeats what was in the first petition.'

One very important condition of the sale the petitioners certainly did not fulfill, that of settling the Patent within six years with fifteen families. In some way, however, they managed to hold the land, perhaps by forfeiting the amount of their Bond, perhaps by securing an extension of time; in either case we should expect to find some entry in the Massachusetts Court Records in regard to it. But there is no reference to the Peabody's Patent between 1773 and 1804, the year of incorporation of the Town. It is perhaps not unreasonable to suppose that in the political disturbances of the time the affairs of the province were rather loosely administered, and that the owners of a wilderness tract were allowed to remain in undisturbed possession, although they had failed to meet a very important condition of their purchase.

In Williamson's *History of Maine* there is an extract from a manuscript letter of Abraham Burbank, Esq. containing some interesting information about the earliest settlement of Peabody's Patent. He wrote that the Patent had in it two families in 1781, but both the men were killed by Indians Aug. 4, 1781. The hos-

tile raid of Canadian Indians in the employ of the British, which resulted in the death of these two and the captivity of Segar and Clarks of Sudbury Canada is described at length in Segar's autobiographical pamphlet published at Paris, Maine in 1823 and re-printed in Lapham's *History of Bethel*. Segar says that on Aug. 3, 1781 there came six Indians from Canada, painted for war and armed with guns, tomahawks, and scalping knives.

Segar, Lt. Jonathan Clark and Cap't Eleazer Twitchell working together in a clearing were taken prisoner by five of these Indians, carried to Clark's house which was nearby and securely bound. While the Indians were plundering the house, the sixth Indian appeared with another prisoner, Cap't. Benjamin Clark. Before the march to Canada was begun, Cap't. Twitchell managed to break away successfully from his captors and successfully eluded pursuit. The Indians loaded their three captives with plunder and late afternoon started up the valley. When they had gone two or three miles, darkness came and they camped for the night. What happened next day in the Peabody's Patent may be best recounted in Segar's own words: 'Early in the morning we were ordered to travel upriver. We came to a place called Peabody's Patent, now Gilead. We went up to a house owned by Mr. James Pettingill. He was at a little distance from his house, when we came to it. He was making towards the house but seeing the Indians at the house, he stopped. The Indians discovered him and called to him to come to them, and he did. Then they searched the house and they found some sugar and in a tub, some cream. The put the sugar in the tub of cream and fell to eating like hogs, but they gave us none to eat. Mrs. Pettingill and a number of children were in the house, but they received no abuse from them. After a short time the Indians told Mr. Pettingill that he must go to Canada. He told them that he had no shoes. They searched the house but found none. They told him then that he might tarry at home but charged him not to leave the house. We went on, I should suppose a mile or more, and we were ordered to stop. Two of the Indians went back and soon returned and Mr. Pettingill with them. We traveled some distance together. On a sudden Mr. Pettingill was missing, I thought they had sent him back but they killed him about half a mile from his house. Some days later his wife found his dead body in the bushes. Mr. Joseph Greely Swan, with several others from Bethel buried him.'

Segar goes on to say that after this melancholy event, the party went on to Shelbourne, N.H. and visited the home of Mr. Hope Austin, who had the good fortune of not being home.

They continued the march for several miles and came to the house of Capt. Rindge. A man by the name of Poole, employed by Rindge was killed and scalped by the Indians, as he was on his way to work in the field. At this point, they left the Androscoggin and started across country for Canada.

Now from the Letter of Abraham Burbank and Segar's Account it seems only one man was killed in Peabody's Patent. The fact that men from Sudbury Canada buried Pettingill would prove no more men in the Patent. It is clear that in 1781 there was only one family in Peabody's Patent. Mr. Pettingill was the first settler in what is now the town of Gilead. Where he came from, of whom he bought his land, whether any descendants of his are now living we do not know. But there can be no doubt that the first white man to fell the forest and make a home in this township was this pioneer who met his tragic fate one summer day 123 years ago.

The next document relating to Peabody's Patent bears the date 1791. It is a plan of the Patent drawn from a survey made in that year. The land is divided into 36 ranges of about equal area.

Three of these are undivided and nine of these are owned by a Mr. Garish, to whom the Bodwells had evidently sold their share of the tract. The remaining 24 ranges are assigned to five Peabodys: to Stephen, six; to Capt. Richard, one; to Richard, six; to Capt. John, seven; to John, four. It is evident that these are all non-resident land owners, and it may well be doubted if at this time (1791) there was a single settler in the Patent.

The name of Garish does not appear in the incorporation or in the early records of the town of Gilead, and the first Peabody's to settle here were Thomas (son of one of the original patentees) who came from Bridgton in 1798, and Jonathan who settled here about the same time and who, with his two sons, Oliver and Amos, was among the incorporators.

Deacon George Chapman in his interesting and valuable autobiographical sketch (pub. in 1867) describes the early pioneer days in this region.

'In February, 1791,' he writes, 'when I was eleven years old, my father journeyed to Bethel from Methuen, Mass. with two two horse teams, with all his family and effects, passing through the towns of York, Gorham, Bridgton, Waterford, and Albany. From the latter place there was no traveled road and but one horse team had ever passed over the ground before and that one, the same winter.

In 1800 there were settled in Peabody's Patent twelve or fifteen families. According to the Census that year, the population was 68. In 1804 the number of families had increased to twenty and the need of highways, bridges, and schools began to be imperative. The incorporation of the plantation into a town was necessary to enable its inhabitants to raise money for these various community uses.

The following Petition was presented to the Legislature of Massachusetts in 1804:

'To the honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court Assembled.

We, your petitioners, inhabitants of Peabody's Patent respectfully represent that the Proprietors of said Patent were not obliged by the conditions of their Grant to build a House for Public Worship nor settle a minister nor make and maintain any Public Road through said Patent, and we, at Present are destitute of all the privileges as also means of raising money for the support of Schools for the Education of our Children, which we view of highest importance not only to ourselves but to the Community at large. The number of our inhabitants does not exceed twenty families which extending from one extremity of this Plantation to the other renders it indispensably necessary that a road be made and maintained on each side of the Androscoggin River not only for convenience but of People who settled above us on said river and have no possibility of getting to the sea port but for passing through the Plantation.

Another consideration which calls for our attention to the roads is to encourage the Travel from New Hampshire. The Legislature of that State have caused a road to be made at a great expense from Upper Coos on Connecticut River which leading toward Portland passes through New Hampshire and arrives at the District of Maine at the Westerly Line of this Plantation at which place they find their travel totally impeded and their designs frustrated which occasions very loud and just complaints which under our present disorganized situation we are incapable of alleviating. Said road in passing through this plantation will necessarily pass a very rapid stream called Wild River which at

(Continued on Page 4)

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

One of our Society's main goals is broadening our base of appeal, attracting an increasingly wider audience and directly involving more of our members in the expression of varied interests of a historical nature. In the coming months we will have an opportunity to demonstrate various broadening activities whereby we seek to develop a larger potential audience and to, at the same time, allow for those with different interests to exhibit skills associated with our heritage.

Three such occasions are school tours which our director and local teachers are working on, graphic art and 19th century styles of living provide the base for our Memorial Day weekend open house and Sudbury Canada Days in August (this year, August 13 and 14) where many skills and pastimes are on display. Each of these activities contribute toward enriching our program of annually scheduled events and "reach out and touch someone" with different kinds of interests.

Each activity has its own reward for the participants. I am sure that Barbara Brown, Gertrude Hutchins, Margaret Tibbetts, the Kuzyks and many others gained a sense of deep satisfaction over the generous, favorable response to the flower show which was part of Sudbury Canada Days. My wife feels rewarded while substitute teaching to be asked if the elementary art show is to be held again. And our Director is pleased to see how interested our youngsters are to visit the museum and to see first-hand how they might have spent a snowy day one hundred years ago when the kitchen was the center of a household's activity and not the TV room.

My interests are in writing occasional articles for the "Courier" and, I hope, in the future, to be able to set up a working model of the Bethel rail depot and nearby railway scenery.

I hope that these observations will act as a rabbit scent in front of a pack of hounds and draw out more response from those of you who would like to contribute to future events and programs. It is just as easy to say so as picking up the phone and dialing the society office at 824-2908.

Donald G. Bennett

IN MEMORIAM

Died, December 5, 1982, H. Clifford Miller, Bethel. Society member since 1980.

Died, December 8, 1982, Margaret Ellis, Oxford. Life member of the Society and generous donor to the Moses Mason Museum.

MUSEUM NEEDS

This year has been a particularly good one for the Moses Mason Museum particularly with the addition of portraits to the collections as well as other furnishings. There are, however, several items that are still needed including andirons, chests of drawers, candle holders, small tables, chairs, paintings and mirrors. Anyone having any of the above items or anything that they think might be appropriate for the museum is cordially invited to call or write the Society at 824-2908 or P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217.

certain season of the year rushes from the Mountains with such impetuosity as to render it impassable in any manner whatsoever. A bridge must of course be erected over said River at an expense that will for several years require the united efforts of Inhabitants and non-resident Proprietors to accomplish. Under our numerous embarrassments we are induced to address the Honorable Legislature and Lay before them *greiva* with a pleasing hope that they in their wisdom will think fit that this Plantation may be incorporated into a Town by the name of Gilead agreeably to the plan herewith annexed with all the rights and privileges which other Incorporate Towns in this Commonwealth enjoy and with the Indulgence of being exempted from State and County Taxes for a term of eight years, flattering ourselves that by that Period that with the Smiles of Providence and our own exertions we shall be enabled in good measure to discharge our heavy burdens and that our population shall increase to a degree that will enable us to contribute our share towards the support of Government. And your petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray.'

Thomas Peabody	Joseph Blodgett
Joseph Lary	Samuel Wheeler
Joseph Lary, Jr.	Samuel Goodnough
Jonathan Peabody	James Davison
Oliver Peabody	Michael Conner
Stephen Messer	David Bradley
James Messer	John Bennett
Amos Peabody	Jonathan Blodgett
Stephen Coffin, Jr.	Eliphalet Burbank
Isaac Adams	John Mason

The petition was granted, and June 23, 1804, Peabody's Patent became the town of Gilead. The first town meeting was held Oct. 24, 1804. Thomas Peabody, Eliphalet Burbank, and Isaac Adams were chosen Selectmen. The valuation of the town was assessed at \$6065. There were twenty-five resident taxpayers. The tax collector for 1904 must, I am sure, be tempted to wish he had been a century earlier, for at that first town meeting, it was voted to let out the collectorship to the lowest bidder at vendue, which was put up and struck off to Ephraim Wight for nine cents on a dollar.'

At the March meeting in 1805 the town voted \$36 for the support of schools, and for several years that was the amount of the annual appropriation for this purpose.

In 1812 the beginning of War with England gave rise to a rumor of a hostile incursion of Canadian Indians like that of 1781 and a town meeting was called 'to see if the town will take some measures to defend itself against her savage enemy in case of invasion.' It was voted to choose Ephraim Wight as an agent 'to go forth and purchase 20 good training muskets, 20 pounds powder, 80 pounds of lead and 100 flints for the purpose of defending the town against her savage foe.'

In the summer of 1811 a special town meeting was called to see what action the town would take in regard to building a bridge across Wild River. It was voted at that meeting to build the bridge and pay for it in neat stock and bread corn. The next year (1812) it was thought unwise to build it 'under the existing state of national affairs.'

In 1813 the bridge was built. At every town meeting for a good many years after, the bridge came up for discussion. Every spring the river showed its resentment at the efforts to tame its wildness, and the bridge had to be rebuilt or repaired every summer. At a town meeting held in 1826 for the purpose of arranging for a purchase of necessary materials for the rebuilding of the bridge, the sum of \$20.25 was appropriated for thirty-two

gallons of New England rum and next year it was found that fifteen gallons more would be necessary to complete the bridge. For forty years the Wild River was a constant source of trouble and expense, but it gave the townspeople rather frequent opportunities to consume strong drink at public cost. The growth of the temperance sentiment in the town is shown by the fact that in 1858 when the first prohibition law was submitted to the people, every vote in Gilead was recorded in its favor.

The question of separation from Massachusetts was submitted to the voters of the District of Maine in 1815, in 1816 and 1819. Gilead voted each time for separation, though there were six votes who steadfastly opposed it.

Eliphaz Chapman was the town delegate to the Constitutional Convention held at Portland in 1819.

The town had no settled minister until 1829. It is recorded in town clerk's records that, 'A legal town meeting was held Nov. 3, 1828 for the purpose of trying a vote to see if the town would settle Rev. Henry White over them as their minister for five years and they united in voting for his settlement without any opposition and chose James Burbank, Eliphet Adams, and Timothy Wight as committee of arrangements at the installment.' The amount of his ministerial salary not given, but in the warrant calling the town meeting it is stated that Mr. White is to be supported 'by having \$100 paid each year by the Missionary Society and the remainder by our funds and as before mentioned in our late subscriptions paper.'

The settlement was not renewed by the town and the term of Mr. White's ministry ended in 1833. He was the only minister to be settled by the town in its corporate capacity.

In Willey's *Incidents In White Mountain History*, published in 1858, is an interesting sketch of the early religious life of Gilead. The material for the sketch was evidently furnished by Rev. Daniel Goodhue, who served as a supply at different times when there was no settled minister in town. After naming some of the incorporators of the town, the author writes: 'They were all exemplary, good men, giving a character of energy to the place. They regarded religious institutions, and helped sustain them by their property and example. They were a church-going people, always attending the worship of God on the Sabbath. From the earliest time of its settlement, it has enjoyed more or less steadily the preaching of the Gospel. Before any Christian Church was planted in it, it had a succession of missionaries, sent from different sources, who were instrumental of great religious benefit to the people. Among these were the Rev. Jotham Sewall, or as he is often called, Father Sewall, and the Rev. Samuel Hidden of Tamworth. In 1818, as a result of the great revival in which one or both the heads of almost every family in town were hopefully converted, a Congregational church was formed consisting of Melvin Farwell and his wife, Abraham Burbank and wife, Widow Susannah Burbank, Betsy Philbrook, John Mason Jr., H. Ingalls, Rhoda Stiles, Mary Peabody, and Ephraim and Seth Wight. This church sometimes through its own efforts and sometimes in connection with Shelburne, has had preaching most of the time since its formation. Its regularly settled pastors have been Rev. Henry White and Rev. Henry Richardson. Besides these, Rev. Daniel Goodhue and others have been supplies for different portions of the time. There is a Methodist church also, which has been instrumental of great religious and moral benefit to the place.'

There is much that might be written of the later history of the town. From 1861 to 1865 Gilead showed that the self-sacrificing spirit of the pioneers was still alive, and sent almost

a third of her men of voting age to the defense of the Union. In 1872 the suspension bridge across the Androscoggin River was built and the two halves of the town were cemented together. The industrial development of the town, the great changes in the conditions of rural life so notably exemplified here, the growing recognition of the attractions of Gilead as a place of summer residence, all deserve the attention of the historian of these later years.

Gilead is today prosperous beyond most farming communities. It has an honorable past. It faces a bright future. May we emulate the virtues of those 'exemplary good men' whose work we are celebrating today. That their legacy of moral and religious energy and strength may be handed on unimpaired to coming generations.'

GENEALOGICAL INQUIRY

Interested in any information on the Towle families including Toal, Tole, Toll, Tolles, etc. for forthcoming book. Write Mary Jane Sanborn, Box 276, Balboa, CA 92661.

1982 ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN TOPS GOAL

Forty individuals contributed \$1375 to the 1982 Endowment Fund Campaign. A goal of \$1000 for this year was reached early in the fall. The Regular Endowment Fund was established in 1975 to assist the Society in broadening its base of support so that additional staff and facilities may be added in the future. Contributors during 1982 were:

Donald and Katherine Bennett, Bethel
Robert LaPointe, Rumford
Charles and Catherine Newell, Bethel
Ellen Coffin, Norway
Donald and Edith Eaton Eddy, Bethel
Ruth Carver Ames, Bethel
Eleanor Wilson, Bryant Pond
Lester and Bessie Bennett, Rumford
Dr. John and Cathy Hart, Bangor
Bertha Thurston, Bethel
Marjorie McArthur Noll, Bethel
Persis Post, Newry
Leslie and Chris Otten, Bethel
Barbara Rich Adams, Lancaster, New Hampshire
Joann Mooney, Ottawa, Canada, In Memory of Margaret L. Lowell
Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Bethel
George and Harriet Stowell, West Bethel
Richard and Jane Hosterman, West Bethel
Betty Prescott, Bangor
Mildred Hanscom, South Portland
Horace and Jean Davidson Fay, Bowdoinham, In
Memory of Miss Josephine Setze and Dr. Sidney W. Davidson
Earlon and Mary Keniston, Bethel
Stanley Russell Howe, Bethel, In Memory of Edward Kenneth Stanley
Doris O. Lord, Haines City, Florida
Judith E. Haskell, Bethel
Royden and Alice Keddy, Gorham
Howard and Virginia Cole, Bethel
Elisabeth Stedman, Ottawa, Canada

Contributions can be made in any amount and are always welcome. They are, of course, tax deductible and can be sent to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217. Many thanks are due all those who made the 1982 effort such a great success.

I BELIEVE IN GHOSTS

by Pearl Ashby Tibbetts

Editor's Note: The following was written by the late Pearl Ashby Tibbetts and read at a meeting of the Society in June, 1981 which focused on the topic "Ghosts and Haunted Houses in the Bethel Area."

In the mid-nineteenth century when old "Blueberry Eye" Godwin was building his house on upper Main Street in Bethel he probably never thought this house would become a safe shelter for ghosts.

It is a pleasant house in a good neighborhood. Dr. Charles Hill was in residence soon after the house was built with living quarters and a doctor's office. This two story and a half house with Doric pillars supporting a piazza has been occupied by doctors and their families ever since.

Dr. Hill died of typhoid fever in the late 1880's. Drinking water came from wells close beside houses. In some cases the well and the family privy were on the same level. Yearly epidemics of typhoid were expected and took a heavy toll. Dr. Hill was tending Cornelia French who lived in the house across the back garden; she and her father had typhoid. One hot day Dr. Hill drank some milk from a glass by Connie's bedside and contracted typhoid. Irving French recovered but both his daughter and the doctor died.

Dr. Gardiner Sturdivant and his family then lived in the house. He was a "horse and buggy" doctor and a good one. He loved beautiful Oxford County and later practiced for many years in Dixfield. Under the eaves in the attic, buried under copies of Dr. Sturdivant's unopened medical journals, was a wooden box filled with human bones, "grinning" skull and all. Early doctors needed bones for reference, for x-ray use in surgery did not become available until around 1900. We do not know whether Dr. Hill or Dr. Sturdivant had brought in and used the bones.

Dr. Tibbetts came in 1906 and bought the house. (The previous tenants had rented because Ella Godwin Rowe did not want to sell the house). He practiced there until the latter part of 1957; he died in February, 1958. Almost to the last he kept on working, seeing patients every day. It was not unusual for him to attend the birth of a baby whose mother had been delivered by him a quarter century earlier.

Over the years on some nights when the moon is full and the north wind moans I have heard faint music on the attic stairs. I still hear it when I stand close to the attic door. Random notes and snatches of old music like jigs and reels drift down the attic steps. Could the bones which lay for so many years in the wooden box under the eaves belong to a sailor or a fiddler who liked such music? I do not know and I gave the bones away years ago to a medical student. But I do know that for more than sixty years drifting down from my dark old attic I have heard old music — which could never have come from a modern radio — and I believe that somewhere in our old house there has for years been a friendly spirit.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Stanley Howe, Bethel. A member since 1966, Mr. Howe has been Director of the Society since 1974.

E. Lee and Mary A. Mills, Locke Mills. Mr. Mills has long been a sustaining member of the Society.

Daniel and Rosalie Thurston Wight, Rumford. Mr. & Mrs. Thurston have long been members of the Society and generous donors.

BOOK NOTE

Maine's Historic Places by Frank A. Beard and Bette A. Smith with Robert L. Bradley and Arthur E. Spiess of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission; Down East Books, Camden, Maine, 1982.

The latest volume in a continuing series from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, *Maine's Historic Places*, answers a long-felt need for a comprehensive list of Maine sites on the National Register. The Preservation Commission, created in 1971 as a result of actions by the Maine Citizens for Historic Preservation group, actually has its origins with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 which in effect created the "National Register," a documented list of sites in the country worthy of preservation because of historic, cultural, architectural, or archaeological significance. While the Register established a strong federal/state partnership in implementing its provisions, it also formed the basis upon which properties could qualify for protection in the form of federal matching grants for preservation and restoration, and tax incentives for restoration work carried out. The Commission, along with concerned individuals and many of the state's historical societies and museums, has carried out the nomination and survey process; an important result is that the recently-published list contains descriptions of over six hundred sites, sixty of which are "Historic Districts" with from three to three hundred structures.

Frank A. Beard, whose *200 Years of Maine Housing* (rev. ed., 1981) features a Broad Street home as a typical Maine residence in the Greek Revival style, will be remembered for his lectures at Society meetings and his popular walking tours of the Broad Street Historic District. In addition, he was also instrumental in the nomination to the Register of both the Peabody Tavern (ca. 1800) at Gilead and the Lower Sunday River Schoolhouse (ca. 1895) at Newry.

With the aid of several other professionals in the preservation field, Beard introduces his subject with overviews of Maine settlement patterns from prehistoric times to the twentieth century, as well as contributing an essay, "Maine History and Architecture, 1750 - 1910." The remainder of the book is divided into seven regions, within which towns are arranged alphabetically and individual sites/districts are described in general. Well-illustrated with photos, the book serves equally as a travel guide to significant Maine sites and as a general history of the State. It also stirs the reader to wonder about other potential Register properties in his/her own area. For those interested in Bethel's past and its high-ranking architectural variety, the guide soon to be published by the Oxford County Historic Resource Survey, funded through the Preservation Commission and compiled at the Bethel Society headquarters, will highlight even further those sites deserving national recognition and preservation.

Randall H. Bennett

SAMUEL BARKER'S ACCOUNT BOOK: THE MISSING PAGES

A particularly interesting figure in Bethel during the first three decades of the nineteenth century was Samuel Barker (1760-1831), who is buried alongside his two wives, two brothers, and other family members in the upper right hand corner of Grover Hill Cemetery. Mentioned often in Lapham's history, he labored in the village as a farmer, ferryman and tailor. He was also active in the militia and a staunch elder of the West Parish. The house which he apparently built soon after his arrival in 1803 still stands near the southern, right hand side of the U.S. 2 bridge over the Androscoggin, (R. Glenn Murphy's today) also the site of what was long known as "Barker's Ferry."

A source of great pride to Samuel was the purported fact that he had "mended clothes for General Washington" as a Continental soldier (Lapham, p. 85). Research by the present writer suggests that this occurred probably near West Point during the almost unbearably harsh winter of 1779-1780 worse even than the one at Valley Forge. Samuel's Bethel and Minnesota descendants inherited his account-book, which allegedly included a notation of a three shilling payment from Washington "to making of a waistcoat", tailor's shears and a swatch of cloth, presumably from the bolt used for the garment in question. The shears have survived and are now on deposit with the National Museum of History and Technology (Smithsonian). Unluckily, the fabric has vanished, while the account-book (also in the Smithsonian) exists only in a mutilated form, the earliest entries dating from 1781.

According to the late, Monticello (Minnesota) grandparents of the author, the first half of the historically invaluable document, commencing in 1776, was given to a cousin in Maine. Another version was that it was being kept by an uncle in Bethel. This would have been either Eli Wright Barker (1841-1917), last member of the family to inhabit the river homestead, or Henry Clinton Barker (1842-1923). In all events, Eli's widow, Lydia (d. 19?), did possess an informative apprentice's indenture, made out and co-signed by Samuel in 1796, since it was reproduced in the local newspaper the year of Henry's death.

Most of the Minnesota Barkers are now gone, and the memory of those who remain is frail. Also dead is Eli's son, Philip Merton Barker (1889-1955), the last Bethel denizen of Samuel's line. Any *Courier* reader who knew "Gramps", as people called him, or was (is) acquainted with any other Maine descendants of Eli or Henry ought to contact the Society or Mrs. Judy Barker in Bethel (207-824-3346). The author, great-grandson of a third brother (Albert Francis Barker, 1836-1894) has been in touch with the great-grandson of a fourth brother Nathaniel (1826-1902), the Reverend Richard Barker of Saco, but to no avail in the matter at hand.

Were it possible to relocate and photocopy the missing pages of the account-book and add them to the portion now in the Smithsonian, Samuel's very plausible claim could be verified and his relics accorded their due place of honor before the whole American public.

Thomas M. Barker, Ph.D.
Professor of History
State University of New York
at Albany

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Laurel Atkinson, Norway. Generous donor and a descendant of the Walker family of South Bethel.

Caroline Brooks, Bethel. Longtime head of the Special Projects Committee and Guide in the Moses Mason Museum.

Dr. Richard and Catherine Lyon Bush, Belmont, Massachusetts. Mrs. Bush is the daughter of Edward P. Lyon, longtime Bethel jeweler and a generous donor.

Cynthia T. Gotjen, Bethel. Mrs. Gotjen owns the former Jewett farm in North Bethel.

Mary Lee Harris, New London, New Hampshire. Mrs. Harris is the granddaughter of William C. and Mary Hastings Howe, natives of East Bethel.

Rodney and Geraldine S. Howe, Bethel. Both Mr. & Mrs. Howe have been long active in the Society and generous donors. Mrs. Howe is also a Charter Member.

EDITOR'S CORNER

Readers of the "Courier" may be interested to learn that one of America's best known poets and journalists in the early years of the twentieth century spent several months in Bethel in 1906 under the care of Dr. John G. Gehring who operated the nationally famous clinic at the end of Broad Street for persons with nervous disorders. Max Eastman in his memoir *Enjoyment of Living* (New York: Harper, 1948) describes Gehring as "the man who saved me from a life of invalidism." A recent biography of Eastman: *The Last Romantic: A life of Max Eastman* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) also supports the significance of Gehring's influence upon his patient.

SRH

1983 BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAM

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| January 6 | "So You Think You Know Bethel" |
| February 3 | Historical Film Festival |
| March 3 | "Spring Street Through The Years", Sue Farrar |
| April 7 | "The Grand Trunk at Bethel", John Davis |
| May 5 | "Reverend Daniel Gould in Rumford." Margaret Joy Tibbetts (joint meeting with the Greater Rumford Historical Society at Bethel). The Bethel Historical Society will hold a joint meeting with the Greater Rumford Historical Society at Rumford, May 18 where the topic will be "Reverend Daniel Gould in Rumford". |
| June 2 | "The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Maine Woods", Paul McGuire, Gould Academy |
| July 7 | Collectibles Night (This meeting will be preceded by the annual Society picnic beginning at 6:30 p.m.) |
| August 4 | "The Katahdin Iron Works 1845-1890", Dr. Joel Eastman, Chairman, Department of History, University of Southern Maine |
| September 1 | Annual Meeting |
| October 6 | Annual "What's It" |
| November 3 | "Bethel During the Civil War", Stanley Howe |
| December 1 | Annual Christmas Program |

All meetings will begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. in the meeting room of the Moses Mason House unless otherwise specified.

1982-83 COMMITTEES

- BUILDING:** Donald B. Eddy, Chairman; E.M. Quinn; Richard Verville; George Noll; Julia Brown; ex officio James Yarnell.
- GARDEN AND GROUNDS:** Sude Vachon, Chairman; Gertrude Hutchins; Hazel Wheeler; Arthur Cummings; Margaret Tibbetts, Jane Vogt; Harry Kuzyk; Joy Yarnell; Emily Saunders.
- EDUCATION AND RESEARCH:** Alvin Barth, Jr., Chairman; George Allen; Rosalind Chapman; Elizabeth Smith; Judith Haskell; Randall Bennett; Sue Wight; Kurt Brown; Jane Hosterman.
- PROGRAM:** Helen Morton, Chairman; Geraldine Howe; Edith Eypper; Richard Fraser; Karen Brown; Ernest Perkins; Maxine Brown; Norman Clanton.
- MUSEUM:** Judy Haskell, Chairman; Marge Noll; Frances Harding; Richard Fraser; Carol Gersen; Agnes Haines; Rosalind Chapman; Floribel Haines; Ruth Wight; Sylvia Clanton; Barbara H. Brown.
- INVESTMENT:** Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Chairman; James D. Alger; Edmond J. Vachon; Royden Keddy; Louise Lincoln; John B. Head; Wilfred Conary; Roger Conant; ex officio Donald G. Bennett.
- SPECIAL PROJECTS:** Carolyn Brooks, Chairman; Sarah Stevens; Edna York; Julia Brown; Persis Post; Sylvia Wight; Gloria Snyder.
- GENEALOGICAL:** Agnes Haines, Chairman; Alden Kennett; Floribel Haines; Nancy H. Mercer; Judy Barker; Gloria Snyder; Mabel Kennett; Mariann Durgin; Neva Coolidge.
- CRAFT:** Cathy Newell, Chairman; Hope Tibbetts; Marlene Marshall; Carolyn Campbell.
- MUSIC:** Arlene Brown, Chairman; Mary Valentine; George Allen; Arlene Walker; Edward H. Hastings; Stephen T. Seames.
- ART:** Katherine Bennett, Chairman; Donald G. Bennett; Helen Morton; Sue Wight; Cathy Newell.
- MEMBERSHIP:** E.M. Quinn, Chairman; Marge Noll; Barbara D. Brown; Jean Owen.
- NEWSLETTER:** Phyllis Roberts, Chairman; Hazel Newell; E. Dick Hastings; Barbara Kuzyk; Marie Brown; Ernest Perkins.

SOCIETY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Donald G. Bennett, President; Alden Kennett, Vice President; Mary C. Keniston, Secretary; Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Treasurer; Trustees: Edith Eaton Eddy, Helen Morton, Catherine Newell, Ronald Snyder, Willard Wight

Join the Bethel Historical Society dedicated to preserving and interpreting the local past.

Membership in the Society entitles you to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) free admission to the museum | (5) quarterly newsletter |
| (2) special discounts at museum store | (6) reduced course fees |
| (3) preferred rate for meeting room rental | (7) voting rights in the Society |
| (4) special library and archival privileges | (8) special invitations to Society occasions |

(Please Print)

Name

Address

Signature

Please check appropriate category and send your remittance to: Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| -----Sustaining \$2.50 (Individual) | -----Life over 55 years \$50.00 single |
| -----Contributing \$10.00 | -----Life over 55 years \$75.00 couple |
| -----Patron \$25.00 | -----Life under 55 years \$100.00 single |
| -----Students (under 18 years) \$1.00 | -----Life under 55 years \$150.00 couple |

HOWE GOULD ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

Society Director Stanley R. Howe, a 1962 graduate of Gould Academy and editor of the "Bethel Courier" was recently honored by the Gould Academy Alumni Association as the 1982 Alumnus of the Year.

The award given annually by the Association recognizes those graduates of Gould who have achieved success in their profession and who have contributed significantly to their communities.

Upon graduation from Gould, Howe attended the University of Southern Maine, receiving his degree in 1966. He was awarded an M.A. in American History from the University of Connecticut and a Ph.D. in Canadian History from the University of Maine at Orono. While at the University of Maine he received two fellowships and served as a teaching assistant in the Department of History. He became Director of the Bethel Historical Society/Moses Mason Museum in 1974.

In 1977 Howe was selected for a study exchange to France by the Rotary Foundation and in 1980 he graduated from the Seminar for Historical Administration at Colonial Williamsburg.

Active in local affairs, he has served on the Board of Selectmen/Assessors for the past seven years, including two terms as chairman. He is currently president of the East Bethel Church Association, treasurer of Alder River Grange, president of the Middle Intervale Meeting House Society, treasurer of the East Bethel Cemetery Association and president of Bethel Library Association trustees. He was coordinator for Indian Raid '81 last year and this year received the community service award of the Greater Bethel Chamber of Commerce for that role.

Howe is currently a trustee for the Maine League of Historical Societies and Museum and president of the Oxford County League of Historical Societies. He is also a member of the Advisory Committee of the Maine Historical Society and a former trustee (now advisory trustee) of Maine Citizens for Historic Preservation.

He has published numerous articles relating to local history and Canadian affairs and taught history at several colleges and universities including USM and Westbrook College.

Published quarterly by the Bethel Historical Society, Stanley R. Howe, Editor. Please address all inquiries and suggestions to Editor, Bethel Historical Society Newsletter, Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217.

BOOK NOTE

For those interested in the history of Oxford County, New England History Press (P.O. Box 70, Somersworth, NH 03878) is reprinting William B. Lapham's & Silas Maxim's HISTORY OF PARIS, first issued in 1884. Rich in genealogy and local lore, this new edition is expected to be out in the spring of 1983 and contains a new name index by Bethel Historical Society member Agnes H. Haines. The pre-publication price is \$35 plus \$1.75 for shipping. After May 30, 1983 the cost will be \$45 plus shipping. Orders and inquiries should be directed to New England History Press at the address above or to (603) 692-3727.

OUR READERS WRITE

Your publication is always interesting and full of tidbits of history and genealogy for those of us researching ancestors who migrated from New Hampshire to settle in Maine.

Perhaps in your readership there is someone who has knowledge of a family I am working on. I would be glad to return postage and any photocopying costs to anyone with data on the family of Isaac Carleton listed in 1810 and 1820 census in Shelburne, N.H. He purchased Oxford County, Maine land in 1802. I'm trying to ascertain when Isaac left Shelburne, where he resided in Maine before his son Moses struck out for New Brunswick in the 1830's.

I receive your publication in exchange for the one I edit for the Maine Genealogical Society. Included a notice on your Bethel Raid celebrations in one of the issues published before the festivities.

Thank you so much, and keep up the splendid work.

Lauralee Clayton
Box 597, Rockport, Maine 04856

The Bethel Historical Society
P.O. Box 12
Bethel, Maine 04217



Grand Trunk Station, 1865-1969

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 8
BETHEL, MAINE
04217